

God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



For Immediate Release

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Painting Unearthed from United Church of Christ Archives Focal Point of Upcoming MOCA Exhibit

The 40-foot-long Beatitudes Wall, acquired by the UCC after the 1964 World's Fair, was discovered just in time for the first full-scale survey of artist Corita Kent's work.

Beatitudes Wall, a paint-on-canvas banner created 50 years ago for an exhibit at the 1964 World's Fair in New York, will be the centerpiece of an exhibit that opens Friday, June 27, at Cleveland's Museum of Contemporary Art. The piece is on loan to the museum from the United Church of Christ, which discovered the artwork in the archives of its Cleveland-based national headquarters in March.

The exhibit, titled "Someday is Now: The Art of Corita Kent," is the first full-scale survey of Sister Mary Corita's 30-year artistic career and will run from June 27 through Aug. 31. The UCC is the exclusive sponsor of "Someday is Now" because of the denomination's historic relationship with the artist and the exhibit's slant toward social justice.

"Unearthing Sister Mary Corita's banner in our archives in time for it to be the focal point of the first full-scale survey of her work is nothing short of serendipitous," said the Rev. Linda Jaramillo, a national officer of the UCC. "Our sponsorship of this exhibit is meaningful on multiple levels. It lifts up Corita Kent's work on issues such as civil rights and women's rights – issues inherent to the UCC – and also sheds light on this important piece of art from the UCC's past."

Out of more than 150 to 200 pieces assembled for the collection, the MOCA curator recommended the UCC's banner, measuring 4 feet high and more than 40 feet long, to be the exhibit's centerpiece.

"The '*Beatitudes Wall*' is an arresting piece, both for its scale and for the way it combines Corita's signature vibrant color palette and hand-painted texts that express themes of love,

peace and understanding," said Rose Bouthillier, associate curator and publications manager at MOCA. "We are very excited to present this piece to a public audience for the first time in almost 40 years and are delighted to be able to take advantage of this unexpected local connection to the life and work of Corita Kent."

Though the painting is more than 50 years old, *Beatitudes Wall* is in "remarkable shape," said Heather Galloway, a painting conservator from the ICA-Art Conservation group in Cleveland who was commissioned by the UCC to repair some areas of flaking paint and some minor tears to the surface caused by mounting.

"What a surprise for all to find out that the UCC was holding such a gem," Galloway said. "I ultimately think the UCC took an important step in helping her work return to the public eye – I'd like to think that Kent would agree."

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About the United Church of Christ:

The United Church of Christ (UCC), headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, is a mainline Protestant denomination with nearly 1 million members and more than 5,100 congregations nationwide. The UCC is a church of many firsts, including the first mainline denomination to ordain a woman, the first to ordain an openly-gay man and the first predominantly white denomination to ordain an African American.

The UCC's motto ("That they may all be one," (John 17:21)) and tagline (God is still speaking,) supports the Church's long-standing commitment to social justice issues and its extravagant welcome to all, no matter who they are or where they are on life's journey.

About MOCA:

MOCA Cleveland, founded in 1968, is a leading force in Northeast Ohio's cultural scene and is recognized nationally and internationally for its presentation of contemporary art and ideas.